

Suspended Disbelief: The Role of the Department of Defense in Interagency Foreign Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response

A Monograph

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Abstract

Suspended Disbelief: The Role of the Department of Defense in Interagency Foreign Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response, by Major William R. Soucie, 53 pages.

What actions, if any, will make foreign humanitarian assistance and disaster response (FHA/DR) operations in the Department of Defense (DOD) more effective? The requirement for interagency responses to events of great magnitude has created the need for leaders of those participating organizations to grasp what is required of them during those instances. The DOD will achieve increased effectiveness in FHA/DR operations by educating strategic and operational leaders on their authorities during FHA/DR operations. This fundamental education will lead directly to the informed achievement of clearly articulated strategic objectives, in whole or in part, through the more effective arrangement of tactical actions in time, space, or purpose.

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Acronyms

AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
CA	Civil Affairs
CMO	Civil-Military Operations
DART	Disaster Assistance Response Team
DOD	Department of Defense
DOS	Department of State
DSCA	Defense Security Cooperation Agency
FHA/DR	Foreign Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response
FDR	Foreign Disaster Relief
GCC	Geographic Combatant Command
GOH	Government of Haiti
HN	Host Nation
HQDA	Headquarters Department of the Army
IGO	Intergovernmental Organizations
JTF	Joint Task Force
MCCLL	Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned
MEB	Marine Expeditionary Brigade
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
MITAM	Mission Tasking Matrix
MLT	Military Liaison Team
NGO	Nongovernmental Organizations
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NWDC	Navy Warfare Development Command
NWP	Navy Warfighting Publication

OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
OGA	Other Government Agencies
OHDACA	Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid
OUR	Operation Unified Response
QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review
SCC	Security Cooperation Community
SECDDEF	Secretary of Defense
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SO/LIC	Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict
TSC	Theater Security Cooperation
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USCG	United States Coast Guard
USG	United States Government
USPACOM	United States Pacific Command

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Introduction

In this age, I don't care how tactically or operationally brilliant you are, if you cannot create harmony—even vicious harmony—on the battlefield based on trust across service lines, across coalition and national lines, and across civilian/military lines, you need to go home, because your leadership is obsolete. We have got to have officers who can create harmony across all those lines.

—General James N. Mattis, USMC (Ret), “Joint Forces Command Conference”

What actions, if any, will make foreign humanitarian assistance and disaster response (FHA/DR) operations in the Department of Defense (DOD) more effective? The requirement for interagency responses to events of great magnitude has created the need for leaders of those participating organizations to grasp what is required of them during those instances. The DOD will achieve increased effectiveness in FHA/DR operations by educating strategic and operational leaders on their authorities during FHA/DR operations. This fundamental education will lead directly to the informed achievement of clearly articulated strategic objectives, in whole or in part, through the more effective arrangement of tactical actions in time, space, or purpose.¹

The Secretary of Defense in the *Quadrennial Defense Review 2014* (QDR) listed foreign humanitarian assistance as a part of the DOD's key pillars.² The execution of FHA/DR are also among the prioritized missions for the US combatant commanders. Despite the requirement to be prepared to execute such missions, there is very little understanding among DOD personnel of what this means or the command and control structure required for such operations.³ While accepting that the QDR addresses primarily the civilian leadership of the country as well as the

¹ Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Army Doctrinal Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations (ULO)* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, May 2012), 4-4.

² Secretary of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review 2014* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), V. Hereafter referred to as QDR.

³ The 2014 QDR provides no explanation of what humanitarian assistance and disaster relief mean for the reader. It provides only that by conducting such missions the United States projects power and wins decisively.

military personnel, the document is remiss in clarifying the supporting versus supported role in such missions and leads the reader to believe that the DOD will execute lead agent functions.

Certainly, the QDR is not the location where one would expect to find detailed command and control structures articulated, yet such ambiguity is not helpful to the average reader.

Since 1993, the Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) has, by authority of the President of the United States, been the lead federal agency in responding to such international crises and holds the fiscal validation process for such responses.⁴ The appointment of a special coordinator by the president directed the Secretary of Defense to provide disaster assistance outside US borders in response to manmade or natural disasters to prevent loss of life. In addition, the order delineated the authority required prior to DOD involvement; namely, the military would provide disaster assistance at the direction of the president, the concurrence of the Secretary of State, or in emergencies when insufficient time exists to gain required authorization and in the interest of saving lives. However, this document did not address the issue of the military's specific role in disaster relief efforts; namely, the order failed to state whether the military was to set its own FHA/DR objectives or was beholden to another organization's lead.

In 2004, the Secretary of Defense released guidance delineating the DOD's role. The Secretary wrote, "DOD's role in disaster response is part of a comprehensive US government approach in which the US Agency for International Development/Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) is the lead agency."⁵ The cable also explained that OFDA must validate humanitarian requirements prior to military commitment of resources; assistance requests directly from a host nation or a US country team are not sufficient to justify DOD participation in

⁴ Anthony Lake, Memorandum for the President, "Appointment of a Special Coordinator for International Disaster Assistance," Washington, DC, undated.

⁵ Secretary of Defense, *Policy and Procedures for Department of Defense Participation in Foreign Disaster Relief/Emergency Response Operations* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2004), 1. Hereafter referred to as *Policy and Procedures..*

a disaster response.⁶ Despite this, most DOD personnel are unaware of OFDA's existence and authority. Of the approximately seventy disasters declared annually, the US DOD participates in three responses on average, at great cost to the US taxpayer. The general lack of understanding at the strategic level of leadership regarding the roles and responsibilities in a foreign humanitarian response results in either redundant or unnecessary tactical actions not effectively arranged in time, space, or purpose.

The ambiguous role of the military in a disaster response is nothing new. Congress early rationalized such measures as legitimate when it considered them to be in the national interest. Following a violent earthquake in Caracas, Venezuela in 1812, the US Congress ultimately passed legislation to deliver foreign aid. The earthquake in Venezuela that precipitated the United States' first foreign disaster assistance mission killed 10,000 people in Caracas alone. American newspapers carried accounts of bodies littering the debris and orphaned children wailing for lost parents. Prompted by these reports, Alexander Scott, an American diplomatic representative to Caracas who had not yet departed for his post, urged Congress to send food to the victims.⁷ The Venezuelans also requested assistance. Congress responded by appropriating \$50,000 for relief supplies to be administered by Scott upon his arrival in the country. US vessels transported the relief commodities, flour in this instance, to the beneficiaries in the devastated area. Unfortunately, the donation arrived in May but Scott did not land until June. In the meantime, the royalists, then battling revolutionaries for control, seized many of the supplies and did not distribute them. They also impounded the vessels and crews that had brought the supplies and

⁶ Lieutenant Colonel Michael Morales, "Managing Airborne Relief during International Disaster Operations" (Graduate research paper, Air University, Maxwell AFB, AL, 2013), 27.

⁷ FAA Souza, First Foreign Aid Bill, April 29, 2012, accessed March 17, 2015, <http://1812now.blogspot.com/2012/04/april-29-1812-first-foreign-aid-bill.html>

released both only after extended negotiations. However, despite all the problems, food reached some of the people and saved them from starvation.⁸

There has certainly been a maturation process in the 203 years since the US government's first foray into international disaster response. That said, the complexity of challenges facing a response have not diminished, though attempts have been made to alleviate such confusion and frustration by assigning roles and responsibilities.

The form and structure of this work are as follows. Addressed at the onset are the context of FHA/DR and its confused role in the DOD. This section serves as the starting point for the discussion. What are the expectations, and why does anyone care? The legal authorities that the DOD must abide by are addressed next as they anchor what the DOD may and may not do legally. This serves to tie the process to fixed limits and clarify positions that were, or were not, established in the contextual understanding phase. This answers whether or not DOD can gain greater efficiencies in FHA/DR operations. The 2014 QDR, as briefly mentioned earlier serves as the base document since in it, the Secretary of Defense is directing his combatant commanders to prepare for FHA/DR missions. The subsequent body of research materials used to support the QDR are those statutory authorities regarding the administration of foreign humanitarian assistance. This extends to Title 10 authorized responsibilities of the DOD. Additionally, a review of the lead federal agency's expectations and procedures is required for a greater understanding of the interagency nature of such US Government (USG) actions. More to the point, the US Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance serves as the validating authority for participation and reimbursement for expenditures in such missions.

Subsequent to the review of authorities, there is a review of service and joint doctrinal guidance in an effort to identify continuities and discontinuities. Delving into service and joint

⁸ Gaines M. Foster, *The Demands of Humanity: Army Medical Disaster Relief* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1983), 9-10.

doctrine to identify possible disconnects between the authorities and doctrine in the DOD identifies gaps in shared understanding. The resulting baseline viewed in light of the joint doctrine serves to identify where the system is working as designed or may present the opportunity to improve the overall process.

The final section of this work makes use of historic FHA/DR operations in which the US DOD has participated. The case studies provide a background of the event, the nuances of the response, and summarizes the key take away points. The Haiti 2010 earthquake response case study analysis highlights a portion of the challenges faced by responders and some circumstances that lead to a key lessons learned. The second case study, Super Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, focuses on steps undertaken to gain greater efficiencies at the tactical level by the DOD strategic and operational leaders. Given the evidence provided by the cumulative research, recommendations regarding the hypothesis and potential future areas of research conclude this monograph.

Context

The military of the United States is in the midst of a transition from protracted land-based wars to a period of unknown requirements.⁹ History has shown the services that reductions in the military forces of the United States in both end strength and budget follow nearly every period of extended warfare (see figure 1).

⁹ Barrack H. Obama, “Statement by the President on Afghanistan,” The White House, 27 May 2014, accessed 18 September 2014, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/05/27/statement-president-afghanistan>. “The bottom line is, it’s time to turn the page on more than a decade in which so much of our foreign policy was focused on the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. When I took office, we had nearly 180,000 troops in harm’s way. By the end of this year, we will have less than 10,000. In addition to bringing our troops home, this new chapter in American foreign policy will allow us to redirect some of the resources saved by ending these wars to respond more nimbly to the changing threat of terrorism, while addressing a broader set of priorities around the globe.”

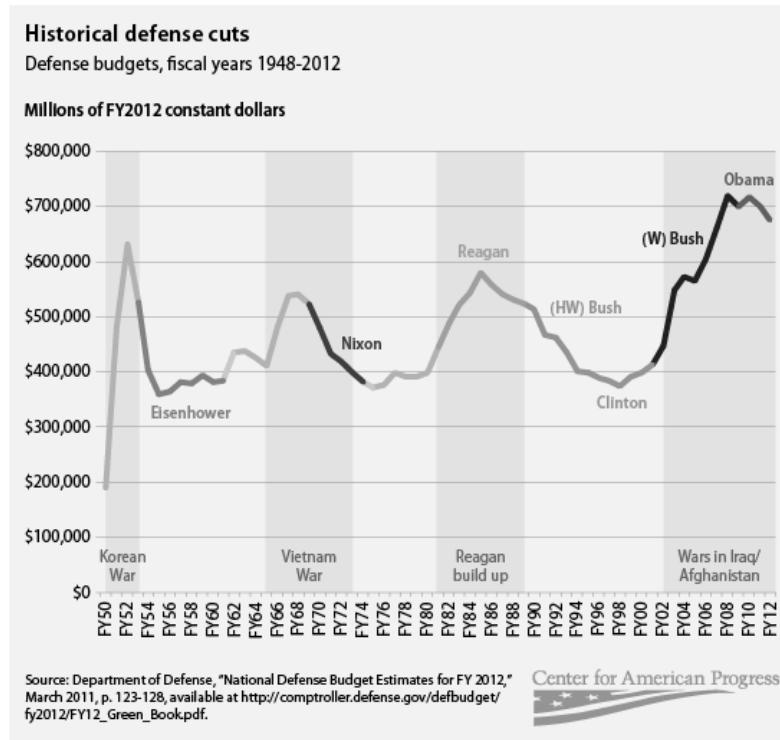


Figure 1. Historical Defense Cuts, Defense Budgets, Fiscal Years 1948-2012

Source: Lawrence J. Korb Laura Conley, and Alex Rothman, “A Return to Responsibility: What President Obama and Congress Can Learn About Defense Budgets from Past Presidents,” Center For American Progress, July 14, 2011, accessed September 18, 2014, <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/report/2011/07/14/10016/a-return-to-responsibility>.

Former Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel led the QDR with a comment about, “tough choices ahead . . . in a period of fiscal austerity to maintain the world’s finest fighting force.”¹⁰ Cynically described as a grab for assets, the services have recently marketed themselves in a less than martial light for the purpose of gaining recruits and an overall shift in public perception (see Table 1). The US Army has focused on the development of the self as “Army Strong,” leading from the front in every endeavor. The US Navy has formerly adopted the mantra of, “A global force for Good, deployed for the betterment of humanity.” “It is not science fiction; it is what we

¹⁰ Secretary of Defense, *QDR*, I.

do every day” from the US Air Force, where futuristic medical aircraft land amid disaster to assist injured civilians during a crisis. This plays to the technocratic theme in a global activist status. The best example of an attempt to demilitarize a service for public consumption is that of “America’s forward deployed crisis response force” by the US Marine Corps. In the USMC recruiting commercial, Marines distribute boxes of aid while their colleagues run to the sound of the devastated. This contributes to the confusion and commonly held misunderstanding that the military leads the US effort in humanitarian crises, a principle and agent problem.

Table 1. DOD Service Specific Public Affairs Efforts	
Service	Recruiting Slogan or Phrase
US Army	Army Strong
US Navy	A global force for good
US Air Force	It's not science fiction, it's what we do everyday
US Marine Corps	America's forward deployed crisis response force

Source: Created by author.

Of course, the leadership role in FHA/DR missions is not the role of the military in the majority of such responses. In the most recent QDR, the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff directed the combatant commanders to focus on humanitarian assistance as one of the key pillars of the defense strategy.¹¹ Given this directive, it is critical to have a clear understanding of what is truly meant by the terms bandied about by military leadership and elected or appointed officials of the US government. The understanding is critical

¹¹ Secretary of Defense, *QDR*, V.

to most effectively arrange tactical actions in time, space, and purpose in order to achieve strategic objectives in whole or in part. It logically follows that by understanding what doctrinal terms mean across the services and the interagency that senior leaders will have a greater capacity for more effective decision making in this important mission set.

Projections show an anticipated leap in the percentage of the global population that will be living in what are being termed as megacities.¹² These megacities are located primarily along the littorals of the world and are poised to serve as epicenters for disease, destruction, and military threats.¹³ As such, the clear understanding of what roles and responsibilities are required in a given set of circumstances prior to execution of the most likely future scenarios provides fidelity to strategic interagency objectives achieved through the arrangement of tactical actions during the response. Doing so in advance will achieve Master Sun Tzu's admonition to conduct "calculations in the temple."¹⁴

When a humanitarian requirement or disaster occurs, the USG has an array of response options at its disposal. In order to respond the minimum criteria needed are as follows:

¹² United States Agency for International Development, *USAID Policy Framework 2011-2015* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), 7.

¹³ National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2008), 23.

¹⁴ Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Ralph D. Sawyer (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994), 167.

1. The affected country must ask for or be willing to accept assistance.
2. The magnitude of the disaster is beyond the organic means of the impacted Nation's response capability.
3. It must be in the interest of the USG to respond by providing assistance.¹⁵

Achievement of these preconditions affords the ambassador or chief of mission the opportunity to officially declare a disaster. The disaster declaration is the tool that allows for the opening of a line of funding for the response. It is not always the case that the US DOD will be directly involved. In more than ninety percent of the USG responses to foreign disaster, OFDA executes without military assistance.¹⁶ The demonstrated requirement for the use of a unique capability drives the use of DOD in FHA/DR missions. The unique capability is often vertical lift in the form of fixed or rotary wing operations. As a result, most responses benefit from the indirect assistance offered by the DOD.¹⁷ Having met the previously stated required conditions, the OFDA director will initiate an executive secretariat memorandum routed from the USAID administrator via the Secretary of State to the Secretary of Defense asking for the unique capability offered by the DOD. Once approved by the Secretary of Defense, via the Joint Chiefs of Staff, communication of the mission to the requisite geographic combatant commander for action takes place.¹⁸ Depending on the scope and scale of the disaster and the size of the response,

¹⁵ United States Agency for International Development, *Field Operations Guide for Disaster Assessment and Response* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2005), XIX.

¹⁶ Leland Suttee, "The Marine Corps and the Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance," unpublished article, 2012.

¹⁷ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *United Nations Civil-Military Coordination Officers Field Handbook* (Geneva, Switzerland: United Nations Printing Office, 2008), 14. Indirect Assistance is at least one-step removed from the population and involves such tasks as transporting relief goods or relief personnel.

¹⁸ While the linear process is laid out here for clarity and ease of understanding, it does not necessarily occur in such a fashion. There are routinely multiple levels of conversation take place and concurrent planning to speed the execution once approval is granted.

the Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) coordinating the response on the ground for the USG, will work with the uniformed forces in a supported to supporting relationship. Simply put, the DOD response serves to support the DART leader (see figure 2).

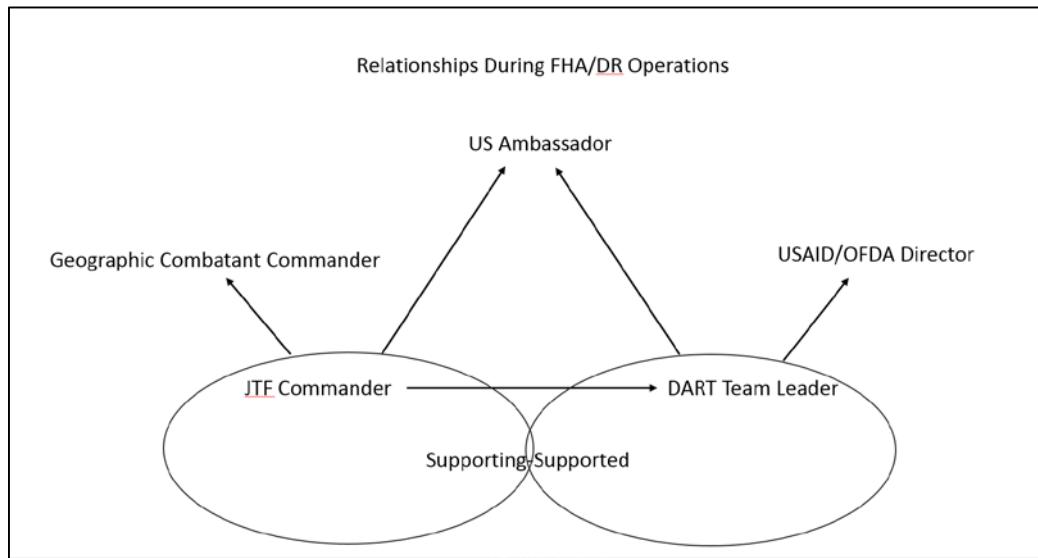


Figure 2. FHA/DR Command and Control

Source: Created by author.

If identified inefficiencies result due to challenges with command and control, then an analysis of the principle-agent relationship in the subsequent case studies may become evident. Prior to the case studies, an understanding of the legal authorities is required for the reader to make the reader aware that actions discussed are authorized and legal.

Legal Authorities

The Secretary of Defense in publishing the QDR takes stock of the global circumstances and communicates his shared vision to the civilian leadership of the United States as well as the combatant commanders. The QDR is a legislatively mandated review of DOD strategy and priorities. The QDR sets a long-term course for DOD as it assesses the threats and challenges that the nation faces and re-balances DOD's strategies, capabilities, and forces to address today's conflicts and tomorrow's threats.¹⁹ In doing so, the Secretary of Defense establishes three pillars from which the remainder of the document flows.

1. Protect the homeland, to deter and defeat attacks on the United States and to support civil authorities in mitigating the effects of potential attacks and natural disasters.
2. Build security globally, in order to preserve regional stability, deter adversaries, support allies and partners, and cooperate with others to address common security challenges.
3. Project power and win decisively, to defeat aggression, disrupt and destroy terrorist networks, and provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.²⁰

It is the third pillar that contains the first reference to providing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. The placement of FHA/DR in the same context as power projection and winning decisively creates a nearly insurmountable cognitive dissonance. It is challenging at best to bring humanitarian principles in line with disrupting and destroying terrorist networks, and defeating aggression. This mixing of capabilities and requirements from the most senior level explains to a certain degree the less than optimal understanding of FHA/DR operations. There is an effort to distinguish the operations later in the document though it too falls short of the mark. The review further states that, "U.S. power projection capabilities are not only about defeating threats. From responding to crises to executing non-combatant evacuations and partnering with civilian

¹⁹ Secretary of Defense, *QDR*, V.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, V.

agencies to conduct humanitarian disaster relief missions, the U.S. Armed Forces project power to provide stability when countries or regions need it most.”²¹ The flaw here does not lie in the separation of FHA/DR from defeating threats, but lies in the confused command and control relationship it articulates.

President Barack Obama, in his 2010 *National Security Strategy* identified the role of the USG in humanitarian crises. He directed that the USG will, “Lead Efforts to Address Humanitarian Crises: Together with the American people and the international community, we will continue to respond to humanitarian crises to ensure that those in need have the protection and assistance they need.”²² The document also speaks to the legitimacy of international order and acceptance of international norms. The president also expressed the desire to, “Enhance Cooperation with and Strengthen the United Nations: We are enhancing our coordination with the U.N. and its agencies. We are working with U.N. personnel and member states to strengthen the U.N.’s leadership and operational capacity in peacekeeping, humanitarian relief, post-disaster recovery, development assistance, and the promotion of human rights.”²³ Despite the clarity of this guidance, questions remain regarding roles, command and control, and authorities. An examination of legal authorities provides a framework to identify discrepancies.

Title 10, US Code codifies the legal authorities of the Armed Forces of the United States. Beyond those standards, regarding the rules and regulations for the armed forces, to include the Uniform Code of Military Justice, are the legal authorities as they pertain to foreign humanitarian assistance operations. US Code, Title 10, Subtitle A, Part 1, Chapter 20, Subsection 407 states:

²¹ Secretary of Defense, *QDR*, 22.

²² US President, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2010), 39.

²³ *Ibid.*, 46.

(a) In General.— The President may direct the Secretary of Defense to provide disaster assistance outside the United States to respond to manmade or natural disasters when necessary to prevent loss of lives or serious harm to the environment.

(b) Forms of Assistance.— Assistance provided under this section may include transportation, supplies, services, and equipment.

(c) Notification Required.— Not later than 48 hours after the commencement of disaster assistance activities to provide assistance under this section, the President shall transmit to Congress a report containing notification of the assistance provided, and proposed to be provided, under this section and a description of so much of the following as is then available:

(1) The manmade or natural disaster for which disaster assistance is necessary.

(2) The threat to human lives or the environment presented by the disaster.

(3) The United States military personnel and material resources that are involved or expected to be involved.

(4) The disaster assistance that is being provided or is expected to be provided by other nations or public or private relief organizations.

(5) The anticipated duration of the disaster assistance activities.

(d) Organizing Policies and Programs.— Amounts appropriated to the Department of Defense for any fiscal year for Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid (OHDACA) programs of the Department shall be available for organizing general policies and programs for disaster relief programs for disasters occurring outside the United States.

(e) Limitation on Transportation Assistance.— Transportation services authorized under subsection (b) may be provided in response to a manmade or natural disaster to prevent serious harm to the environment, when human lives are not at risk, only if other sources to provide such transportation are not readily available.²⁴

It is worth noting that the constant theme that runs through the law is that of indirect assistance, those methods are one-step removed from the beneficiary population. The statute refers to services, equipment, and transportation all in the context of saving lives, preventing harm, and occurs only in the case when other means to achieve the same end are not available.

This statute also establishes the Overseas Humanitarian Assistance, Disaster, and Civic Aid

²⁴ US Code, Title 10, Subtitle A, Part 1, Chapter 20, Subsection 407, Foreign Disaster Assistance, Legal Information Institute, Cornell University Law School, January 7, 2011, accessed November 18, 2014, <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/10/404>.

funds. These funds and missions fall under the purview of the Secretary of Defense, delegated to the Deputy Undersecretary for Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict, and further to the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA).

The mission of the DSCA is to “lead the Security Cooperation community (SCC) in developing and executing innovative security cooperation solutions that support mutual U.S. and partner interests. Their vision is to enable a whole-of-government effort to build and maintain networks of relationships that achieve US national security goals.”²⁵ In this role, the DSCA serves as the entity that controls the purse strings for FHA/DR operations. DOD Directive 5100.46, Foreign Disaster Relief (FDR), states that DOD shall respond to foreign disasters in support of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) pursuant to the requisite executive orders and laws.²⁶ The directive states that the DOD shall consider FDR assistance requests from USAID, the Department of State, and other Federal departments and agencies based on USG and/or appropriate international organization assessment(s) of the disaster, the availability of requested assistance, the impact on ongoing or potential military operations of providing such assistance, the effect on security cooperation objectives, and other relevant factors associated with DOD involvement.²⁷ Articulated clearly in the directive, the chain of command has the DOD serving in a supporting role. Moreover, military decision makers receive direction to assess the risk to steady state missions while considering the execution of operations in support of FHA/DR operations.

²⁵ Defense Security Cooperation Agency, “Mission, Vision, Values,” accessed November 18, 2014, <http://www.dsca.mil/about-us/mission-vision-values>.

²⁶ Deputy Secretary of Defense, Department of Defense Directive 5100.46, Subject: Foreign Disaster Relief (FDR), Washington, DC, July 6, 2012, 1.

²⁷ Ibid., 2.

Why then are the conduct of such operations routinely clouded by questions of command and control, funding, and authority?²⁸ A partial answer may be contained in the reference section of this particular DOD directive. It includes guidance regarding when the document must be reassessed and rewritten. The time line identified for this particular matter was within six years or no later than 2022. It is imperative to understand that the current iteration of this document, published in 2012, supplanted a document from 1975. Even the definition used for foreign disaster relief in the directive fails to cite the OFDA.²⁹ This error is similar to having the US Navy define amphibious landings and follow on operations without consulting the US Marine Corps. Despite the formal process for requesting military assistance, local US ambassadors and country officers in the relevant regional bureau at the Department of State have often requested DOD assistance directly, leaving USAID and OFDA out of the loop. Moreover, some officials at the Department of State seem to be neither familiar with disaster management issues and procedures nor even aware of USAID's and OFDA's role as the lead federal agency for FHA/DR activities.³⁰

To further reinforce the statutory guidance USAID staffs OFDA to provide the leadership to the DOD. The OFDA has representation stationed with geographic and functional combatant commands. The personnel that comprise the forward staffed Military Liaison Team, serve to

²⁸ Jennifer D.P. Moroney, Stephanie Pezard, Laurel E. Miller, Jeffrey G. Engstrom, and Abby Doll, *Lessons from Department of Defense Disaster Relief Efforts in the Asia-Pacific Region* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2013), 23.

²⁹ Ibid., 10, FDR. Assistance that can be used immediately to alleviate the suffering of foreign disaster victims. Normally, it includes services and commodities as well as the rescue and evacuation of victims; the provision and transportation of food, water, clothing, medicines, beds, and bedding, temporary shelter, the furnishing of medical equipment, medical and technical personnel; and making repairs to essential services. This term is equivalent to "emergency relief" as defined in part 060 of Volume 2, U.S. Department of State Foreign Affairs Manual (Reference (k)).

³⁰ Charles M. Perry and Marina Travayiakis, *The U.S. Foreign Disaster Response Process: How it Works and How it Can Work Better* (Cambridge, MA: Institute of Foreign Policy Analysis, 2008), 4.

advise the commanders and staff regarding the legal and most efficient participation in FHA/DR missions. While not forward deployed responding to crises, these humanitarian professionals host courses to inform US DOD and interagency personnel on best practices and expectation management. These personnel also strengthen relationships with nongovernmental organizations and gain regional expertise pertinent to their combatant command. When a natural calamity takes place, these Military Liaison Team members may remain in place as the senior humanitarian representative coordinating the military contributions to the relief efforts or they may go forward to the relief zone to conduct such actions forward. This is one example of a tool that commanders must leverage to gain greater efficiencies and clarity in understanding when called upon to respond to FHA/DR missions.

Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid funding, or appropriations, serve as the key economic driver for FHA/DR operations for the combatant commanders and their subordinate forces. Expenditures not validated by the OFDA via the mission-tasking matrix are unlikely reimbursable and will be treated as expenditures from the commanders' operating and maintenance budgets.³¹ In the present fiscal environment of the DOD, it is crucial that leaders account for every dollar expended, but also they must endeavor to extract the most out of the spending power as possible. Given the fiscal constraints of the DOD, funding is a crucial factor that will have the most meaningful impact on raising awareness of the benefit of conducting FHA/DR operations in a greater informed and more efficient manner.

The legal authorities previously addressed grant the use of such “disaster” funds; what though does this mean to the DOD? This funding allows for execution of steady-state humanitarian assistance projects, designed to meet the basic needs of civilian populations in

³¹ United States Naval War College, Mission Tasking Matrix, (MITAM) Example, October 1, 2011, accessed on March 17, 2015, [https://www.usnwc.edu/mocwarfighter/Link.aspx?=Images/Articles/Issue1/MITAM_Example_\(MOC_Warfighter\).xls,](https://www.usnwc.edu/mocwarfighter/Link.aspx?=Images/Articles/Issue1/MITAM_Example_(MOC_Warfighter).xls,).

partner nations, while improving DOD access, visibility, and influence. It provides for valuable civilian-military cooperation, capacity building of partner nations, and strengthening of regional stability and security, while promoting US national security interests. It also offers DOD the ability to transport humanitarian relief supplies and provide non-lethal DOD excess property to partner nations. The funding also offers DOD the ability to respond rapidly to crises by supplying non-lethal equipment/supplies, providing transportation of humanitarian assistance-related resources, and the provision of unique services to address urgent and critical humanitarian needs.³²

The challenge to authority arises when commanders force the hand of the Secretary of Defense and act immediately because they view action to be in the interest of saving life and limb of impacted populations. This is not usually an incorrect assessment and is influenced by the direct, or nearly direct, proximity to the disaster as stated above. Title 10 in Subsection 2561 appears *prima facie* to offer a reimbursable funding source. It states, “The Secretary of Defense may use the authority provided by paragraph (1) to transport supplies intended for use to respond to, or mitigate the effects of, an event or condition, such as an oil spill, that threatens serious harm to the environment, but only if other sources to provide such transportation are not readily available. The Secretary may require reimbursement for costs incurred by the Department of Defense to transport supplies under this paragraph.”³³

Planners generating response options for their commanders do those leaders a disservice should they not be educated on the requisite validation to recover the funds as authorized by the

³² Defense Security Cooperation Agency, “Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid (OHDACA) Appropriations,” Washington DC, July 2012, accessed November 18, 2014, <http://www.dsca.mil/programs/humanitarian-assistance-disaster-relief-mine-action>, 1.

³³ US Code, Title 10, Subtitle A, Part IV, Chapter 152, Section 2561, Humanitarian assistance, Government Printing Office, accessed November 18, 2014, <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/USCODE-2010-title10/html/USCODE-2010-title10-subtitleA-partIV-chap152-sec2561.htm>.

legislation. In their 2008 report, *The U.S. Foreign Disaster Response Process: How It Works and How It Can Work Better*, Charles Perry and Marina Travayiakis, cite a useful example of such a hurried action and the repercussions.³⁴ In response to an undersea earthquake and tsunami in the Solomon Islands on April 2, 2007, US Ambassador to Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu, Leslie V. Rowe, requested urgent military assistance from US Pacific Command Commander, Admiral Timothy J. Keating directly, including helicopter support that had proven so popular and effective in previous responses. USAID determined that no more than \$200,000 worth of non-military US assistance was required, and US Pacific Command had to absorb most of the costs of deploying the USS *Stockham*. Hence, even though the *Stockham* proved useful once it was on the scene, it was not essential as the capabilities were not unique, i.e. civilian capacity could provide the same services. The entire episode illustrates how calling on US military assets prematurely and/or unnecessarily can waste scarce resources and burden an already over-taxed military.³⁵ The key to this action, as articulated above, is the mission-tasking matrix from OFDA.

Service Specific Doctrine

The US Army and the US Marine Corps share a document that serves as the basis for their FHA/DR practices. The US Army has a designated branch to handle the matters of civil affairs that nests within the special operations forces (SOF) community. That said, the SOF community is a narrow audience that finds itself at odds with the larger conventional army at times. This construct appears to present a challenge to sufficient information flow when information is required during crises. Similar challenges befall the US Marine Corps. While the US Marine Corps fashions itself as, “America’s Forward Deployed Crisis Response Force,” there

³⁴ Perry and Travayiakis, 12.

³⁵ Ibid., 12.

is no single doctrinal document to codify FHA/DR for the total force. A search of the US Marine Corps doctrine finds over three hundred references to foreign humanitarian assistance and disaster relief ranging from aviation practices to legal guidance but nothing has been written as the principle service-wide doctrinal reference. This tact only serves to codify the ad hoc nature of FHA/DR at the service level. The Marine expeditionary units have a component in their pre-deployment certification where evaluations on FHA/DR knowledge take place. This self-reflection and internal evaluation process lends itself to questions of legitimacy when one identifies the closed loop evaluation.³⁶ To that end, no outside personnel beyond the US Marine Corps are conducting the evaluations and so no truly critical eye is validating the go or no go criteria.

The closest publication to capturing the FHA/DR mission is contained in a civil affairs manual, Army Techniques Publication 3-57.20/Marine Corps Reference Publication 3-33.1C, *Multi-Service Techniques for Civil Affairs Support to Foreign Humanitarian Assistance*.³⁷ The purpose of the manual is to:

establish the techniques used by individuals, teams, and units of United States (U.S.) Army and U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) Civil Affairs (CA) forces, as well as planners of civil-military operations (CMO) at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war. The techniques prescribed in this manual inform engagement with other government agencies (OGAs), indigenous populations and institutions (IPI), intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and other military and nonmilitary entities in support of conventional and special operations missions.³⁸

³⁶ Commandant of the Marine Corps, Navy and Marine Corps 3500.99, *Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) Training and Readiness (T&R) Manual* (Washington, DC: Department of the Navy, Headquarters Marine Corps, November 13, 2012), 3-4.

³⁷ Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA)/United States Marine Corps (USMC), Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 3-57.20/Marine Corps Reference Publication (MCRP) 3-33.1C, *Multi-Service Techniques for Civil Affairs Support to Foreign Humanitarian Assistance* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, February 15, 2013).

³⁸ Ibid., iii.

At first glance, this seems like a keystone document and has much merit to serve as such. The publication falls short in the same way that the service specific doctrine does by appealing to a narrow readership. Unless the senior leaders involved have come from the requisite community that derived the doctrine referenced above, the document does not garner the attention of the joint force or higher headquarters charged with arranging the tactical actions addressed to achieve the strategic goals articulated by higher headquarters. To date, no stated direct reasoning or speculation explains the relegation of this publication only to those designated in the civil-military operations field.³⁹ The US Marine Corps and Army do their respective branches a disservice by not broadening the scope of the intended audience to capture maximum efficiency. The training of the entire force in a given skill set is not without precedent. A training requirement for both services of integral importance is the ability to fire a rifle at the individual level. The reason for this is that there may be a requirement to defend oneself, regardless of occupational specialty, from an attack either at home or abroad. The realization that firing a rifle is likely to take place while one is serving their country precipitates this training. That said, relatively few personnel actually discharge their weapons in the face of the enemy, but it is essential that personnel understand the basic mechanics and are not learning this lesson for the first time in the execution phase with lives hanging in the balance. Yet, knowing that FHA/DR operations take place at least three times a year, there is little to no training for the force at large on how best to properly understand and execute such missions. The amount of time and effort spent inculcating a force on a mission that only a few will actually execute seems counterintuitive when juxtaposed with the lack of training and education allocated to a mission that takes place no

³⁹ Civil affairs belongs predominantly to the reserve component of the US Marine Corps, and as such must contend with the parochialism of active duty versus reserve status further undermining the legitimacy of this text and the mission set.

fewer than three times annually across the globe. This lack of comprehensive education and training is an area that provides opportunity to gain greater efficiency in FHA/DR operations.

The US Marine Corps and US Army publication is quite useful in detailing the complexity of FHA/DR operations. It identifies the lead role of USAID's OFDA early on; however, consistency is not maintained throughout the publication. Confusion is introduced just a few paragraphs beyond the well written introduction, "Based upon the geographic combatant commander's (GCC's) guidance, the FHA force commander should establish policy regarding technical advice and assistance to the affected country, United Nations (UN), NGOs, and IGOs as soon as possible."⁴⁰ There is no mention in this section regarding the lead agency or the supported and supporting relationship. The ambiguity of the message is a reflection the complexity of the operations discussed therein. The shared emergent property of each publication is that efficiencies gained through clarity doctrinal publication and addressed via education of strategic leaders are necessary.

The US Navy has the most objectively accurate doctrine regarding FHA/DR of all the military services. In Navy Warfighting Publication (NWP) 3-29, *Disaster Response Operations*, the Navy clearly targets a broad spectrum of intended audiences. The strength of the publication lies in the appeal directly to ships' captains and planners from the outset. The executive summary appeals to the rote efficiency required to keep a ship afloat in that it offers a succinct checklist of information that must remain inviolate. The key concepts as stated in NWP 3-29 are:

Ten Key Concepts for Navy Support of Disaster Response Operations:

- 1.** The intent of disaster response activities is to save lives and mitigate human suffering.
- 2.** Military is never in charge of disaster response efforts.

⁴⁰ HQDA/USMC, ATP 3-57.20/MCRP 3-33.1C, 1-2.

- 3.** Department of Defense cooperation with the designated lead federal agency can be important to ensuring rapid humanitarian assistance in large scale disasters, where the military's transportation, logistics, and engineering capabilities are critical.
- 4.** Nonmilitary government/civilian agencies and international organizations are experts on disaster response.
- 5.** Effective response requires knowledge of laws, regulations, local culture, and roles of different resources responding to the disaster.
- 6.** Collegial organization structure exercising a collaborative decision process; although local civil authorities are usually in charge, there often is no one person/entity coordinating disaster response efforts.
- 7.** For foreign disaster response, the lead federal agency is the United States Agency for International Development with responsibility assigned to the Office of the Foreign Disaster Assistance. For domestic disasters, the Federal Emergency Management Agency is the lead federal agency. The lead federal agency, not the military, leads and coordinates overall United States Government disaster response activities.
- 8.** With few limited exceptions, e.g., doctors and nurses, Navy resources should endeavor to avoid direct contact with the affected population.
- 9.** Effective disaster response requires open/unclassified communication protocols.
- 10.** The internationally recognized lexicon of disaster response is established, Navy participants need to adopt it when communicating with non-Department of Defense participants in the disaster response effort.⁴¹

This set of clear boundaries serves as the starting point for what is a well-structured and clearly articulated manual for the conduct of FHA/DR operations. Restated throughout the text are the command and control structure bolstering the supporting role of the DOD, US Navy in this instance. There is a constant focus on short-term participation and the need for indirect support options merely to bolster the international community until the unique capability is redundant and no longer required.

Adherence to the doctrine aside and despite the succinct nature of the key concepts, the publication falls short in defining what emergencies are, and what constitutes a response. This

⁴¹ Navy Warfare Development Command (NWDC), Naval Warfighting Publication (NWP) 3-29, *Disaster Response Operations* (Norfolk, VA: Department of the Navy, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, December 2011), EX-1.

trend is the same across the services and is not to be wholly unexpected. Given the unique service cultures and varied mission sets, it seems logical to surmise that there will be some disparity in language when approaching a particular shared mission. For example, the US Navy doctrine has particular emphasis on sea-based operations, while the US Marine Corps reflects partnership with the Navy while conducting the operations ashore. These service disparities achieve rectification in the joint doctrine that is to serve as the basis for the execution of such operations. The US Air Force so fully embraces the primacy of joint doctrine that they do not have a FHA/DR document or manual and accept the unity of effort offered by the joint publication. This is a luxury not afforded to the other services given their assigned roles and missions. To identify whether gaps discovered in the service doctrine are addressed an examination of the joint publication for FHA/DR occurs next

Joint Publication Discontinuities

Joint Publication (JP) 3-29, *Foreign Humanitarian Assistance* confuses the roles and responsibilities at the beginning of the publication. The publication states, “FHA provided by US forces is limited in scope and duration; designed to supplement or complement the efforts of the host nation (HN) that has the primary responsibility for providing that assistance; and may support other USG departments or agencies. Although US military forces are organized, trained, and equipped to conduct military operations that defend and protect US national interests, their inherent, unique capabilities may be used to conduct FHA activities.”⁴² The implication, that the DOD elements responding to a FHA/DR mission only “may” support other USG departments or agencies is disingenuous in that it may leave the cursory reader with the conclusion that leadership is split fifty percent of the time or some other fraction. The desire to remain in charge

⁴² Joint Publication 3-29, *Foreign Humanitarian Assistance* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, January 3, 2014, IX.

of operations does not change the fact that DOD has only been the lead agency in responding to a foreign disaster once.⁴³ USAID's OFDA responds to an average of seventy disasters in fifty-six countries every year to ensure aid reaches people affected by rapid on-set disasters—such as earthquakes, volcanoes, and floods—and slow-onset crises, including drought and conflict.⁴⁴

The selective use of ambiguous wording throughout the joint publication further confuses the matter for the DOD audience. JP 3-29 states, “The HN is the nation receiving the assistance, in whose territory the forces or supplies of partner nation’s organizations or North Atlantic Treaty Organization transit or operate. The HN will coordinate all relief efforts within its territory. US forces conducting FHA do so with the permission of the HN under the guidance of formal and informal agreements.”⁴⁵ Choosing to use the phrase “*US forces*” vice using the “*USG entities*,” leads the reader to believe that the US DOD is likely to be the lead responder in such instances. The failure to clarify the roles leads to a misrepresentation of the problem statements and a resultant inability to identify end states and conclusions accurately.⁴⁶

Armed with a contextual understanding of FHA/DR and having conducted both a legal and doctrinal review, the reader now has a basic understand of the legal framework that DOD is operating within as well as a greater appreciation for the ambiguity that planners face when confronted with service and joint doctrine regarding FHA/DR. The vehicle employed for this task will be that of the case study. The two case studies selected are the earthquake in Haiti in early 2010 and the super typhoon in the Philippines in the fall of 2013. Background information,

⁴³ Jim Nichol, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress RL34518, *Russia-Georgia Conflict in South Ossetia: Context and Implications for U.S. Interests* (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, March 3, 2009), 2.

⁴⁴ United States Agency for International Development, “Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance,” updated July 23, 2014, accessed February 28, 2015, <http://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/organization/bureaus/bureau-democracy-conflict-and-humanitarian-assistance/office-us>.

⁴⁵ JP 3-29, XI.

⁴⁶ HQDA, ADRP 3-0, 4-3.

conduct of the response, and key take away points serve as the framework for ease in comparing and contrasting the two case studies. The information gained from these examples, when coupled with the researched information from previous sections serve to support or disprove the hypothesis that greater education of senior leaders on FHA/DR operations will result in greater tactical efficiencies in the conduct of said operations.

Case Studies

Case Study I: Haiti Earthquake 2010

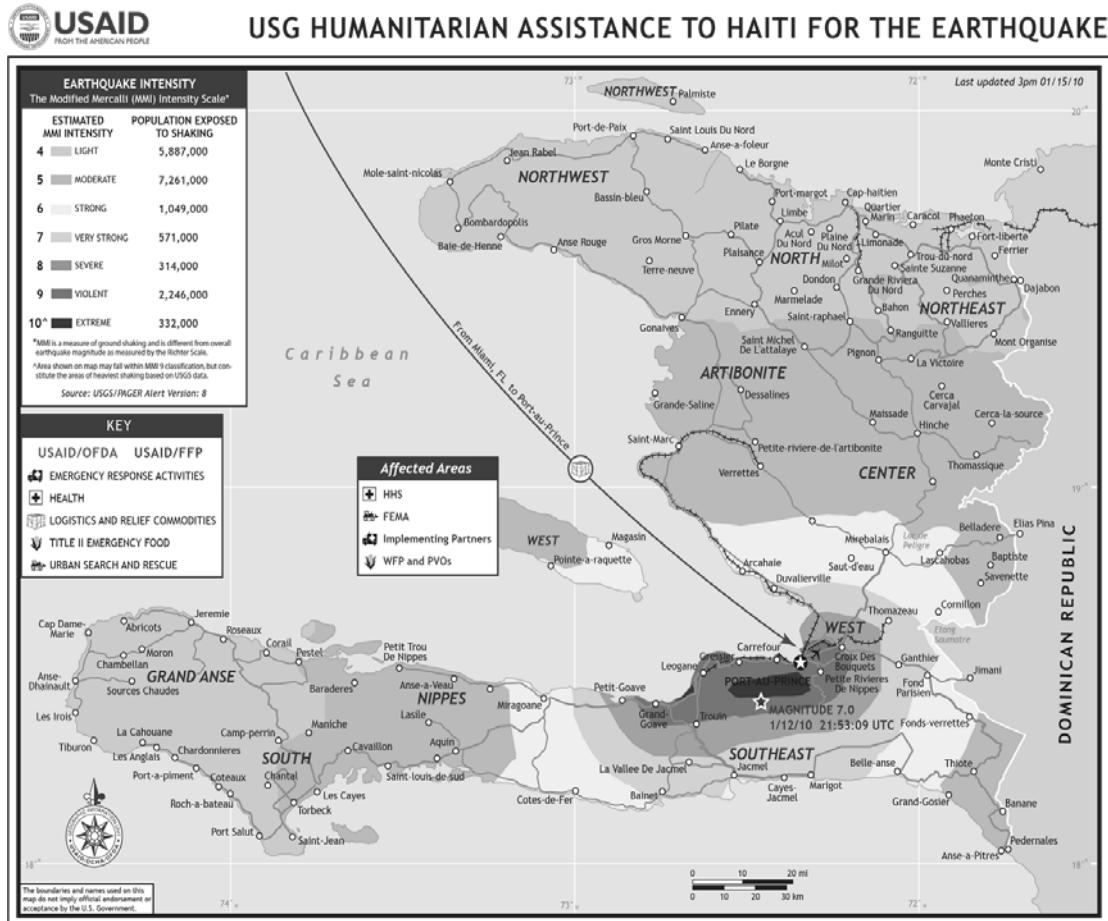


Figure 3. USG Humanitarian Assistance to Haiti for the Earthquake

Source: United States Agency for International Development, “USG Humanitarian Assistance to Haiti for the Earthquake,” January 2010, accessed October 11, 2014, <http://www.usaid.gov/gsearch/Haiti%2Beathquake%2B2010>.

Background

The year 2010 was disasterous for the people of Haiti. The disaster began on January 12, 2010 when a massive 7.0 earthquake shook the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince to its core,

killing over 215,000 people and leaving another two million homeless.⁴⁷ Only months after the earthquake, Hurricane Tomas affected the island, followed by a dangerous cholera outbreak across the country. These disasters were not unique in that the devastated country was an impoverished island nation with only one airport and one seaport, but because of its close proximity to the United States. Additionally, USAID reported that the earthquake struck ten miles from the capital city, directly impacting a major urban area. The density of the city and extent of the destruction required extensive rubble clearing just to reach some affected areas. Approximately forty percent of Haitians lived in Port-au-Prince and the surrounding areas, and the city constituted a significant market for many goods from throughout Haiti. As a result, the earthquake affected livelihoods and access to goods for a much larger population than if the earthquake had affected a more rural area. The importance of the shipping and transportation networks based in Port-au-Prince to livelihoods and food security countrywide made re-establishing port and airport capacity one of the critical early objectives for the response.⁴⁸

Response

Deputy Commander of US Southern Command, Lieutenant General P. K. “Ken” Keen, was making a visit to Haiti at the time of the earthquake. Being on scene, he was designated the commander of what would become Joint Task Force (JTF) Haiti.⁴⁹ With the seat of the Haitian government literally in ruins, Lieutenant General Keen reflected, “The rapid deployment of forces and capabilities was effective, but not always efficient. In the initial hours after the earthquake, we had limited situational awareness of the extent of the damage and we were unsure of the

⁴⁷ World Concern, “Haiti Earthquake Facts and Figures,” ReliefWeb, January 5, 2011, accessed November 9, 2014, <http://www.reliefweb.org/report/haiti/haiti-earthquake-facts-and-figures>.

⁴⁸ United States Agency for International Development, *USAID Annual Report* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), 23.

⁴⁹ Robert M. Gates, *Duty* (New York, NY: Alfred A Knopf, 2014), 421.

critical needs of the Haitian people and government. In order to respond quickly, our initial ‘push’ of forces and relief was executed outside the formal planning, sourcing, and tracking mechanisms.”⁵⁰

The OFDA Disaster Assistance Response Team was officially functioning by January 14, 2010. At that point, the US DOD already had four US warships, in addition to the 22nd and 24th Marine Expeditionary Units at its disposal. Initial command relationship friction resulted from multiple agencies eager to take action in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake arriving with no coordination. To better illustrate this it is important to note that there was no OFDA representation in the Joint Interagency Information Center command and control wire diagram visually depicting the interagency input relationship. The text on the same slide represents USAID and the DART as separate entities further supporting the lack of clarity and confusion on the ground.⁵¹

Major Matthew Lundgren, Operations Officer, Battalion Landing Team 3/2 recalled, “Standing up a JTF headquarters when you’re essentially in the middle of your mission, with zero planning . . . All the staff processes that are required for a large headquarters were figured out on the fly.”⁵² The lone functional airport, Toussaint Louverture International Airport, was reopened

⁵⁰ Lieutenant General Ken Keen, “Haiti, My Top 5 Observations,” DoD Live, April 16, 2010, accessed November 9, 2014, <http://www.DODlive.mil/index.php/2010/04/haiti-my-top-5-observations>.

⁵¹ Joint Center for Operational Analysis, “Operation Unified Response Haiti Earthquake Response,” Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned, May 14, 2010, accessed February 25, 2015, https://community.apan.org/cfs-file.ashx/_key/telligent-evolution-components-attachments/13-3653-00-00-00-05-84-23/Operation-United-Respose-JOCA-Report_5D00_.pdf, slide 102.

⁵² Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL), *Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief: Operation Unified Response* (Quantico, VA: Headquarters Marine Corps, 2010), accessed January 10, 2015, https://www2.mccll.usmc.mil/index.cfm?disp=myBinder_viewBinder.cfm&binderId=3933, 12. Hereafter referred to as *Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief*.

by the 1st Special Operations Wing the previous day.⁵³ The amount of military personnel and assets brought to bear in the response overwhelmed the humanitarian community on the ground and raised questions regarding the command and control of the USG response on the ground. The appointment of a new USAID administrator only three days prior to the earthquake, made matters worse resulting in less than desirable on-the-job training in a remarkably high visibility environment.

Key Take Away Points

The Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned was succinct in their assessment:

The responsiveness of the United States Department of Defense (DOD) and Department of State (DOS) and other countries to the earthquake in Haiti was the hallmark of Operation Unified Response (OUR). The rapid deployment of forces and buildup of capabilities was effective in providing immediate lifesaving and life sustaining relief. Nevertheless, operations were not always efficient because they were executed outside of formal planning, sourcing, and tracking procedures. HA/DR operations do not have an established chain of command or formal organization and due to the crisis management nature of HA/DR, initial organization will typically be of an ad-hoc nature.⁵⁴

The sheer magnitude of the devastation, coupled with the close proximity of Haiti to the United States, afforded the US DOD the ability to surge a robust capability to the affected area in hours vice the days or weeks commonly associated with disasters in different parts of the world. This proximity also afforded the same opportunity for rapid deployment of news media creating additional pressure for a well-orchestrated response.

US Southern Command personnel recall the events of 2010 in a positive light. The JTF-Haiti senior planners and leaders worked alongside their counterparts from the United Nations, USAID, and other organizations to develop detailed plans for moving the internally displaced

⁵³ United States Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), “Operation Unified Response: Support to Haiti Earthquake Relief 2010,” accessed November 9, 2014, <http://www.southcom.mil/newsroom/Pages/Operation-Unified-Response-Support-to-Haiti-Earthquake-Relief-2010.aspx>.

⁵⁴ MCCLL, *Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief*, 2.

persons that appeared to be in danger with the impending rainy season. Engineers worked with the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti to identify camps in Port-au-Prince that were in direct danger of flooding and mud slides. JTF-Haiti conducted detailed assessments and executed plans to mitigate the dangers and reduce the number of people for movement. During this period, JTF-Haiti personnel were instrumental in searching the rubble of the Hotel Montana for remains of missing American citizens believed lost during the earthquake.⁵⁵ While accurate in articulating accomplishments, the wording supports that there is a more efficient way of conducting FHA/DR. The DOD commissioned RAND report, *The US Military Response to the 2010 Earthquake in Haiti*, captures, “at the peak of the military response, on January 31, 2010, JTF-Haiti included more than 22,200 personnel, thirty-three U.S. Navy and US Coast Guard (USCG) vessels, and more than 300 aircraft. During the first three weeks of Operation Unified Response, the voice confirmation process facilitated a rapid ‘push’ of people and capabilities into JTF-Haiti but also resulted in responders arriving without full situational awareness and direction. Moreover, the lack of any formal requirements assessment may have resulted in additional inefficiencies.”⁵⁶ The RAND report further concludes that, “although JTF-Haiti led a prompt, robust response, planning and coordination shortfalls hindered its efficiency and, potentially, its effectiveness. The relief effort in Haiti was accomplished without the benefit of well-established plans within SOUTHCOM for such a mission because those plans were still being developed and did not take into account the scale of devastation that Haiti experienced.”⁵⁷ Through education of strategic and

⁵⁵ SOUTHCOM., “Operation Unified Response: Support to Haiti Earthquake Relief 2010,” accessed November 9, 2014, <http://www.southcom.mil/newsroom/Pages/Operation-Unified-Response-Support-to-Haiti-Earthquake-Relief-2010.aspx>.

⁵⁶ Gary Cecchine, Forrest E. Morgan, Michael A. Wermuth, Timothy Jackson, Agnes Gereben Schaefer, and Matthew Stafford, *The US Military Response to the 2010 Earthquake in Haiti* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2013), XV.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 65.

operational leaders and establishing interagency relationships, the supporting role of the US military and the supported role of the interagency, lead to greater opportunity for planners to prepare cogent plans at the operational level achieving strategic objectives through the arrangement of tactical actions in time, space, and purpose.⁵⁸

While the lessons learned reports from US Southern Command are replete with statistical measures of performance, there is little to support the effectiveness of such tactical actions. The mission of JTF-Haiti was: “JTF-Haiti conducts humanitarian assistance/foreign disaster response operations in support of USAID in Haiti to save lives, mitigate near-term human suffering and accelerate relief efforts to facilitate transition to GoH, UN, and USAID.”⁵⁹ The JTF commander used the term push concerning the conduct of the disaster relief operations. This begs the question; to whom were these assets pushed? Who requested the assets? Did the opening of the port in such a quick manner facilitate the delivery of necessary supplies to accomplish the USG lead’s mandate of saving lives, alleviating human suffering, and reduce the social and economic impact?

Humanitarian assistance operations are, in essence, logistics operations. The logistics war fighting function becomes the focus over other functions traditionally associated with joint operations such as fires, maneuver, and intelligence. JTFs executing FHA/DR must be weighted for success in logistics command and control capability.⁶⁰ Reviewing the operation for the USG, the above mentioned RAND review found that, “The informal, top-down process that pushed resources to the effort so quickly generated inefficiencies that might have impaired the operation’s effectiveness. In estimating initial mission requirements and rushing high volumes of

⁵⁸ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Doctrinal Publication 3-0, *Unified Land Operations (ULO)* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, October 2011), 9.

⁵⁹ LTG Ken Keen, quoted in Gary Cecchine et al., 32.

⁶⁰ MCCLL, *Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief*, 18.

people, equipment, and supplies forward, the operation was likely flooded with more of some resources than were needed and less than were needed of others.”⁶¹ These actions further bolstered the fog of relief vice clarifying the unity of effort.

Despite the challenges presented, OFDA developed the mission-tasking matrix in order to validate expenditures of the Overseas Humanitarian Disaster, and Civic Aid funding. Previously there was no formal method to track expenditures, as the amounts were small enough and manageable. The magnitude of this disaster and the overwhelming amount of DOD resources necessitated a more formalized way for the lead federal coordinator to provide careful oversight and take supporting agencies to task. This also empowered the DART and reinforced the priority of humanitarian efforts on behalf of the beneficiaries and the Government of Haiti. The lack of unity of effort across leadership realms also highlighted the need for interagency education as well. Disaster response operations routinely occur while responding to rapid or sudden onset emergencies. Individually these problems appear minute, but taken together they serve as warning of a greater lack of clarity.

⁶¹ Cecchine et al., 65.

Case Study II: Super Typhoon Haiyan/Operation Damayan

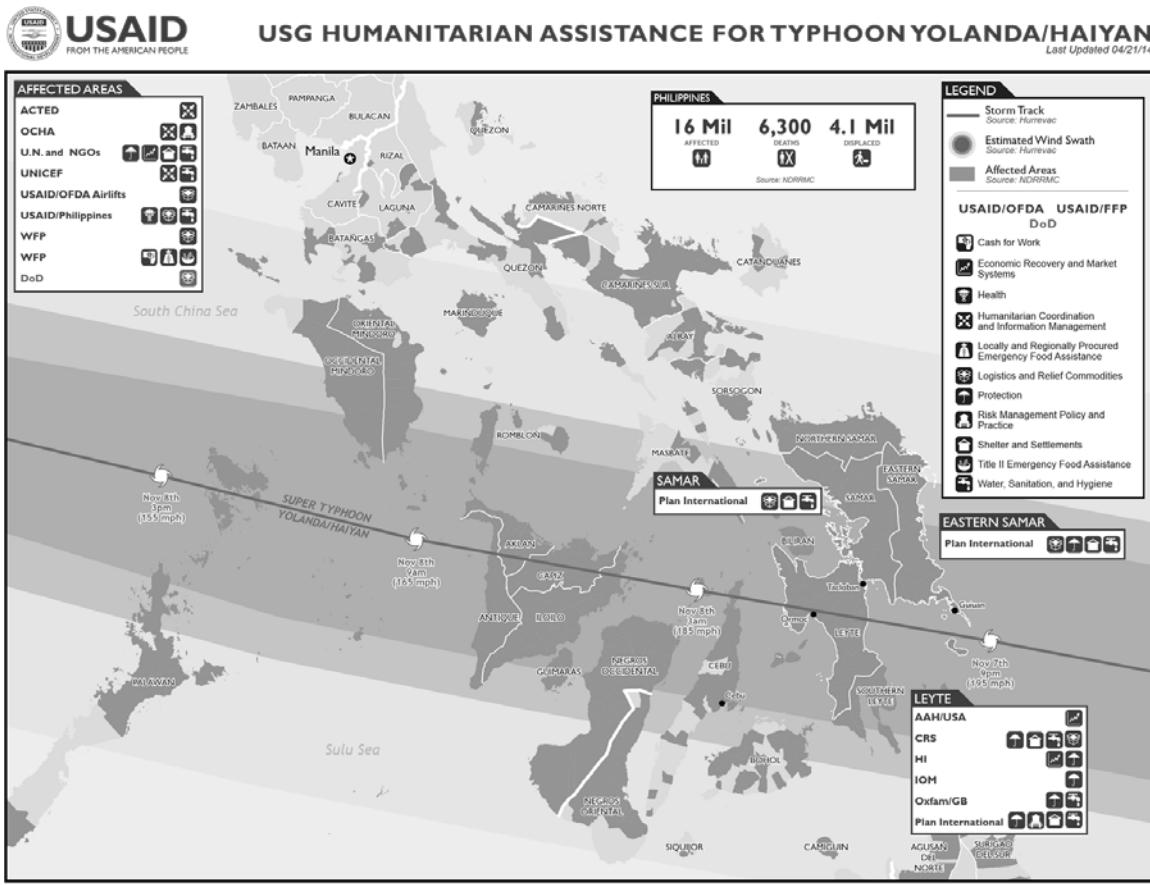


Figure 4. USG Humanitarian Assistance for Typhoon Yolanda/Haiyan

Source: United States Agency for International Development, “USG Humanitarian Assistance for Typhoon Yolanda/Haiyan,” April 2014, accessed October 11, 2014, <http://www.usaid.gov/haiyan/fy14/fs22>.

Background

On November 3, 2013, tropical depression 31W formed in the western Pacific Ocean with a path that would eventually make direct impact with the Philippines. As the storm approached Palau on November 5, 2013, the Philippine National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council began issuing public advisories alerting the local authorities to monitor the

situation and disseminate early warning information to the communities. Wednesday November 6, 2013 saw Haiyan (known locally as Yolanda) strengthen to become a super typhoon. According the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Haiyan had sustained winds up to 200 miles per hour (320km/h) with gusts ranging up to 225 miles per hour (360 km/h).⁶²

On November 8, 2013, category 5 super typhoon 31W, named Haiyan made landfall on the central islands of the Visayas region of the Philippines.⁶³ The Super Typhoon caused significant damage to infrastructure and resulted in the death of several thousand civilians (6,092 as of January 10, 2014) and millions left without food or shelter. Typhoon Haiyan compounded the effects of a October 15, 2013 earthquake in the affected area.⁶⁴ On November 9, 2013, US Charge d’Affaires Brian L. Goldbeck issued a disaster declaration, and the USAID, through the OFDA, immediately authorized release of funds for the initial implementation of an emergency response program. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel directed the US Pacific Command to deploy rescue teams, dispatch helicopters for airlifts, and conduct other relief efforts.⁶⁵

⁶² William R. Soucie, “Marshall CAPSTONE Document” (Leadership 690 Capstone USMC HA/DR Assessment, Marshall University, Huntington, WV, April 2014).

⁶³ The author served as a member of the USAID/OFDA DART for Super Typhoon Haiyan. The author was directed to travel to Pacific Command in Hawaii to assist the OFDA representative, the Humanitarian Assistance Advisor/Military. This assistance would eventually result in the author’s writing contribution to the Pacific Command execution order and the subsequent Marine Forces Pacific execution order.

⁶⁴ 3D Marine Expeditionary Brigade, “Operation Damayan After Action Report,” March 9, 2014, quoted in *Marine Corps Lessons Learned News Letter* 10, no. 5 (May 2014): 3, accessed January 10, 2015, https://www2.mccll.usmc.mil/index.cfm?disp=myBinder_viewBinder.cfm&binderId=3960.

⁶⁵ Thomas Lum and Rhoda Margesson, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress R43309, *Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda): US and International Response to Philippines Disaster*, Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, February 10, 2014, accessed Februray 25, 2015, <http://www.cfe-dmha.org/Information-resources/lessons-learned/2013-typhoon-haiyan-philippines.html>, 7.

Response

Over the period November 11 through December 1, 2013, 3D Marine Expeditionary Brigade as the forward command element of the alert contingency Marine air ground task force and other forces of what became JTF-505, responded to validated relief mission tasking from USAID following Super Typhoon Haiyan. In coordination with the Armed Forces of the Philippines, other partner nation militaries and non-governmental organizations, JTF-505 delivered 2,453.4 tons of relief supplies and transported 19,628 Philippine, American, and third country national evacuees from the most severely affected areas.⁶⁶ The Commanding General of the 3D Marine Expeditionary Brigade, Brigadier General Paul Kennedy, stated at the onset of the response mission that, “The primary mission is providing immediate and unique . . . life-sustaining aid until the host nation can take over, at which point US military aid ought to be backed off. HA/DR is about augmenting, not taking over functions.”⁶⁷ Other support included expeditionary airfield operations in support of aid distribution, and production and distribution of potable water. Per JTF-505 Execution Order 2, end state for the JTF was: “additional loss of life and human suffering prevented, USAID and GRP no longer require unique US military capabilities for relief operations, and a rapid and responsible transition to the appropriate relief organization within their appropriate capability and capacity to sustain current operations.”⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Joint Task Force 505 Maritime Component Commander, “Operation Damayan 10 Nov to Dec 1, 2013,” Overview Brief, quoted in *Marine Corps Lessons Learned News Letter* 10, no. 5 (May 2014): 3, accessed January 10, 2015, <https://wss.apan.org/s/tf70/default.aspx>.

⁶⁷ Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL), “Foreign Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief: Operation Damayan,” April 2014, accessed August 7, 2014. https://www2.mccll.usmc.mil/index.cfm?disp=COPS/COP_View.cfm&ssiteid=465, 3.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 16.

The III Marine Expeditionary Force's expeditionary posture and close proximity to the affected area facilitated a port and effective response.⁶⁹ The availability of forward based amphibious shipping that permitted a low impact footprint on damaged infrastructure ashore also provided flexibility. Other key factors include habitual relationships and staff practices developed with USAID, other US Pacific Command forces and foreign nation military counterparts during frequent theater security cooperation and engagement exercises, and recurring FHA/DR operations. General Kennedy was working hand in glove with the DART team leader. The general understood that the relationship to the DART was supported, and that the Marine Expeditionary Brigade, with its unique capabilities, supporting. Strong relationships between the DART team leader and the commanding US generals greatly enhanced a smooth relationship between civilian and military actors.⁷⁰ There was concern that with the George Washington Carrier Strike Group, and ultimately the III Marine Expeditionary Force arriving, there would be more personnel in the Philippines than would be required. Essentially, the leadership would be scaling up while the requirements for the unique capabilities are winding down.⁷¹ On November 24, 2013, DOD officials announced it would begin to transition all of its relief efforts to the Philippine government and that JTF-505 would stand down on December 1, 2013. The US embassy in Manila announced JTF-505's December 1 disestablishment, noting that at its peak,

⁶⁹ MCCLL, "Foreign Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief: Operation Damayan," 8.

⁷⁰ Center For Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Response (CFE-DMHR), "Lessons from Civil-Military Disaster Management and Humanitarian Response to Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda)," Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned, January 2014, accessed August 7, 2014, http://star-tides.net/sites/default/files/documents/files/CFE_Lessons%20from%20Typhoon%20Haiyan.pdf, 36.

⁷¹ MCCLL, "Foreign Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief: Operation Damayan," 9.

US military efforts included more than 13,400 military personnel, sixty-six aircraft, and twelve naval vessels.⁷²

Key Take Away Points

Several positive take away points emerged from this response from a USG and US Marine Corps perspective. For the Marine Corps, this was a great opportunity to exercise the Marine Expeditionary Brigade's flyaway command and control capability. The Marine Expeditionary Brigade demonstrated the scalable nature of the command and control structure and proved that the command element did not require permanent sea-basing. Additionally, the rapid nature of the deployment supported the US Marine Corp's forward deployed crisis response force billing. Publication of the disaster declaration cable and the executive secretariat memo facilitated the near immediate action of the Marine Expeditionary Brigade/Marine Expeditionary Force in Okinawa, Japan.

It is important to note that OFDA pre-staged personnel in Manila to rapidly assess what was anticipated to be a major disaster even before it occurred.⁷³ This prescient step allowed timely assessments and shaped the expedited disaster declaration process. The inclusion of a civil military affairs coordinator as part of that team resulted in expedited integration of the US DOD to the response in a focused and guided manner. As such, established and clearly defined rules of the road set the conditions for transition before the operation truly began. This observation is a key distinction from the previous case study where the DOD was on the ground in advance of the OFDA DART.

⁷² Lum and Margesson, 8.

⁷³ This is a critical differentiation from the earthquake example of Haiti but does not solely account for the discontinuities between the examples.

Communication was a key to the success of the operation. Informal interagency coordination supported timely responses once formal requests arrived. Strong relationships before a disaster strikes enable informal coordination to occur alongside formal processes. Informal networks based on trust, prior experience, and common training proved essential to effective coordination.⁷⁴ The regular USAID/OFDA-led interagency calls, including DART participation, provided interagency partners with a venue for information sharing and for getting up to date analysis on the response. This included members of the DOD in Washington DC, US Pacific Command, and in the Philippines. There was an effort for absolute transparency throughout. The Typhoon Haiyan disaster response forum provided an opportunity for conversations about agency capacities and longer-term development issues so that every equity was able to see what was on the horizon to the extent possible. USAID/OFDA's system for validating requests in the field, specifically the Mission Tasking Matrix, proved an effective way to coordinate requests with DOD and ensure fulfillment of high-priority needs. The Mission Tasking Matrix made certain that the DART and DOD were working in concert. General Kennedy's guidance, repeated routinely throughout any number of meetings and conversations, called for a pursuit of action but not at the expense of the DART, the US ambassador, the Philippine government, or their military.

The initial footprint of the US forces on the ground in the Philippines was the appropriate size for the early stages of the response. That said, the footprint rapidly expanded and grew to a JTF commanded by a lieutenant general by the end of the operation. All too often military decision makers, not always those on the ground, choose to operate on a push versus pull method. Instanced where personnel and resources are moved to a theater in anticipation of future use though no call for the items has come from those on the ground. The efficient conduct of a humanitarian assistance/disaster relief operation, as discovered here, is in the opposite manners

⁷⁴ CFE-DMHR, "Lessons from Civil-Military Disaster Management and Humanitarian Response to Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda)," 36.

pull versus push. This allows for the senior civilian leadership, at the behest of the host nation, to identify what needs are required and then the best way to source those requirements. The DART civil military affairs coordinator for Operation Damayan addressed the issue of force composition of the responding DOD unit as his primary concern in the response.⁷⁵ Accepting that there are friction and uncertainty, particularly during the opening hours and days of a response, seeking every measure of relative advantage that could alleviate friction is crucial. The rapid response efforts with regard to Super Typhoon Haiyan are widely acclaimed and deemed successful by many observers and aid workers. Overall, it was the general feeling that civil-military cooperation was probably some of the best, if not the best, seen in such a relief operation although this varied between locations and between the efforts at the tactical/field level and those at the operational/managerial/oversight levels.⁷⁶ Yet, the effectiveness of the coordination varied by location and method, and much of the credit given to coordination was likely due more to the fact that there was reduced “competition” between the major responders because the actors restricted their actions to their appropriate duties during the response.⁷⁷ The education of the senior military leaders regarding FHA/DR prior to a crisis, in this instance led to greater efficiency in the execution of the operation.

Conclusion

This monograph began with a basic question about whether or not the DOD could make FHA/DR operations more effective. The basic hypothesis was that it could do so by educating

⁷⁵ Daniel Dieckhaus, interview by John Troutman, Camp Aguinaldo, Manila, Republic of the Philippines, November 26, 2013, Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned, accessed February 27, 2015, https://www2.mccll.usmc.mil/index.cfm?disp=COPS/COP_View.cfm&ssiteid=465, 3.

⁷⁶ CFE-DMHR, “Lessons from Civil-Military Disaster Management and Humanitarian Response to Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda),” 37.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 2.

strategic and operational leaders on their authorities before the execution of such operations. The prominence of FHA/DR in the QDR, coupled the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff guidance, brought to light the high level of visibility that such missions have in the DOD. There is a greater emphasis on the respective services' FHA/DR missions given the understanding that there is a competition for resources in the DOD. The recruiting commercials and public affairs campaigns provided recognition that these operations are important to the services but they do not support the understanding of these missions. The legal authorities as published in Title 10 of US Code articulate the authorities afforded to the DOD when directed to support FHA/DR missions. The supported and supporting relationship is clearly delineated when these laws, coupled with the presidential executive order, name the OFDA director, via the USAID administrator, as the USG lead for FHA DR.

The Secretary of Defense via the Deputy Undersecretary for Policy heads the FHA/DR mission set inside the Pentagon. This is further delegated to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operational/Low Intensity Conflict and then to the DSCA that handles the funding aspect of FHA/DR operations. This is where the centralized understanding of FHA/DR essentially stops. From DSCA there is no organization in the DOD that owns the maintenance of FHA/DR planning, training, operations, or execution. During the research for this monograph, there was no discovery of an operational structure between the strategic level understanding inside the Pentagon and the tactical level executers when a crisis occurs. The author clearly identified this disjunction when reviewing the service doctrine. The doctrine lacked unity of effort and unity of command. This is confusing given the guidance codified by law where the command and control apparatus is established.

The case studies covered two rapid onset disasters in disparate parts of the world. Operation Unified Response in Haiti during 2010 following the January earthquake highlighted the chaos surrounding a problem not pondered in advance. The massive scale of destruction that

literally toppled the government of Haiti was only exacerbated what the research identified as a less than complete problem solving effort of senior US governmental, civilian, and military leadership. The challenges ranged from not understanding the existing laws to incomplete knowledge of the doctrine governing the response

The second case study, Operation Damayan, or Super Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines is a clear articulation of the changes that took place in the three years following the earthquake in Haiti. The services' respective doctrine was rewritten in the time between disasters. The efforts of the USG bolstered the efficiency of the Philippines response. The initiative of the leadership and planners of the 3D Marine Expeditionary Brigade to seek out OFDA personnel in advance of a disaster to garner a better understanding of expectations produced positive results when juxtaposed with Operation Unified Response in 2010.

Evidence provided by the two case studies support that increased efficiencies are gained by educating strategic and operational leaders on their authorities during FHA/DR missions. Achieving and implementing this education are areas for future study. A greater reliance on the Joint Humanitarian Operations Course, offered by the OFDA Military Liaison Team, will enhance the education of DOD and other interagency partners while also establishing the key relationships so often mentioned for success. The creation of a structure to manage FHA/DR within the DOD would prove useful. Such an entity may supervise the DOD wide training, development of doctrine, and participate in the execution of FHA/DR missions. One major benefit of the organization would be its role in mitigating the ad hoc nature of command and control that so often clouds the early hours in the FHA/DR environments. Short of creating a new organization, the DOD consideration of a service filling the role of executive agent for FHA/DR, for all of the same justifications, should be considered.

A more broadly educated strategic leader, and planner corps, can better leverage the elements of operational art to achieve greater tactical efficiency. Understanding the end state and

conditions of the USG lead, in concert with the military commander, affords the planner greater flexibility. Clausewitz offered a compelling way forward: “Habit hardens the body for great exertions, strengthens the heart in great peril, and fortifies judgment against first impression.”⁷⁸ Keeping this in mind, the treatment of FHA/DR like other military operations that require planning, forethought, structure, and leadership will result in the more efficient achievement of FHA/DR ends, while honing the core skill sets of the military planner and operational artist.

⁷⁸ Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 122.

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